here, but I disagree that ''all meaningful prosecutorial'' actions have been taken away from the commander. These are the actions that still rest with the commander, and these are meaningful: granting clemency, highly meaningful; grant sentencing witnesses, highly meaningful; granting immunity, highly meaningful; ordering depositions, highly meaningful; preliminary inquiries, highly meaningful; separation authority, highly meaningful. These are things that are essential to the prosecution of any case, and so if the prosecutor doesn't have the right to do these things, it means the prosecutor has to go ask the commander: May I do these things? May I call this witness? May I have approval for a witness at sentencing? May I have approval for this preliminary inquiry?

That request alone sends the signal to survivors and to servicemembers that the chain of command is still in charge; that that independent prosecutor, while the language of the bill sounds really good—they are independent and their decision is binding, wonderful. The perception of servicemembers who understand the weight of convening authority, they know what the words ''convening authority'' mean; they know what the command ability and importance is.

They may not receive these changes and these reforms in the way the chairman believes them to be seen. They may not see them as the ''most transformative reforms'' that have ever happened because if they still perceive the chain of command in charge, it may not dent their willingness to report these crimes. They may not have now the ability to report and to have a belief that they can have faith in this system.

And so my question to the chairman is, Why didn't we take the extra step to do the one thing that we have been trying to do for 8 years, which was to make these prosecutors, these independent, specialized prosecutors—which is what we have been fighting for, for 8 years—truly independent and give them all the authority the convening authority had?

The only change they would have had to make is the designation of ''convening authority'' would go from the commander to these new, independent, trained prosecutors. It is a simple change. It is a change we have begged for from the survivor community, from the veterans organizations, from Protect Our Defenders, the best and most effective vocal organization, per the chairman. We have asked for that one change—to be denied by this conference committee of four men in a closed room making the decision themselves.

And for the chairman to get up and say that having such an overwhelming vote by the House of Representatives just shows how right they are, well, then why does 220 cosponsors in the House mean nothing? Why does 66 sponsors in the Senate mean nothing? Why does the endorsement of every veterans group in America mean nothing? Why does the support of 29 attorneys general mean nothing? That is my question.

And it is such a small thing.

So, yes, having an independent, trained military prosecutor outside the chain of command whose decision is binding sounds amazing. That is what we have been fighting for. Why not make it really independent? Why not take the convening authority and give it to the independent, trained military prosecutor?

And, sadly, the answer is the DOD does not want to change the status quo. They don't want to make these changes, and so what they are willing to do is they are willing to put a great label on it. They are willing to pretend that they are doing the thing that we have asked them to do. They are willing to create the impression that they are doing the thing we asked them to do. But they know what ''convening authority'' means, and they retained it.

And when asked: Please, take the convening authority, give it to the trained military prosecutor; please make a truly independent system, like all these people are asking you to do, they said no. They said no over and over and over again.

And, unfortunately, our chairman did not want to disregard the views of the Department of Defense. And, unfortunately, that is my job, to oversee, to provide oversight and accountability over the Department of Defense, over the executive branch. That is what the Constitution requires this Chamber, this body, this Senate to do. We are not supposed to take our marching orders from the Department of Defense. We are not supposed to do what the generals ask us to do.

We are supposed to look hard and fast at a problem that has plagued our servicemembers who give their lives for this country. We are asked to solve the problem, and we have put forward legislation that has the blessing of 66 Senators and 220 House Members and every veterans organizations that we know of and every single of the 29 attorneys general who have written a letter. We have this breadth of support, but it doesn't matter because it is not what the DOD wants to do.

So, yes, having independent, trained military prosecutors who make decisions outside the chain of command that cannot be changed is definitely a step in the right direction, but it is not the independent review that we asked for because without convening authority, the perception of servicemembers, of survivors, of the men and women this justice system is designed to protect will be that all these rights and privileges sit with the commander and that these are rights and privileges that have value, that have ''meaningful prosecutorial value.''

They are not meaningless, and if they were so meaningless, then you would have given it to independent prosecutors.

That is why I will keep fighting on behalf of survivors. It is why we do not just say we are excited, and we go home. It is why we have not decided this is the moment to celebrate because, for us, it is not because I worry that that percentage of sexual assaults, rapes, and unwanted sexual contact—the 20,000 that are estimated every year—that the percentage of those that will be willing to come forward will not go up and the rate of cases will not go down and the rate of cases that end in conviction will not go up.

So that is my concern. It is why I stand here gravely concerned and very dismayed and very disappointed that we did not take this moment in time to do the right thing on behalf of our servicemembers to have a military justice system that is worthy of their sacrifice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, this week, the Senate is going to take up three Ninth Circuit judges, three Federal judges for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

And in the process, the Biden administration is going to smash an institutional and constitutional norm between the executive and legislative branches, particularly the executive branch, the White House, and the U.S. Senate that every U.S. Senator—all 100 of us—should be concerned about.

Let me explain. This is a really important issue.

Article II, section 2, of the U.S. Constitution says the following:

> [The President] shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States.

Now, that includes Federal circuit court judges,

Throughout this, article II, section 2, provision of the Constitution, it says: ''[W]ith the Advice and Consent of the Senate.'' We are ''of the Senate,'' right here. And this week, we will be voting on three U.S. court of appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Now, this provision in the Constitution, like so many which gives the U.S. Senate the exclusive right for the advice and consent power, was the result of compromise.

If you look at the history in Federalist Nos. 75 and 76, Alexander Hamilton argued that this provision afforded a necessary means of checks and balances against the executive branch, against the President.

The Constitution—according to the U.S. Senate history that I am quoting from—''also provides that the Senate shall have the power to accept or reject

presidential appointees to the executive and judicial branches.''

This was born of compromise, as I mentioned:

In debating the issue, the framers addressed concerns that entrusting the appointment power exclusively to the president would encourage monarchial tendencies. Additionally, as the Senate was to represent each state equally, its role—

The advice and consent role in the Constitution—

—offered security to the small states, whose delegates feared they would be overwhelmed by appointees sympathetic to larger states.

For these reasons, since I have been in the U.S. Senate, I have taken this advice and consent role very seriously for all nominees: during the Obama administration, when I was here for the last 2 years of that administration; all of the Trump administration; and now the Biden administration.

And as you can imagine, whenever I have asked for a meeting of any nominee so I could meet with them under this constitutional provision for a Senate-confirmed position, every single administration I have dealt with—the three I just named—has said: Of course, Senator. That is your constitutional role. Of course you should meet with them.

Why is that? Why has every White House said yes?

Because, as I just mentioned, they know that that is literally our constitutional role, as I just mentioned.

So every time I have asked for one of these meetings for a Senate-confirmed nominee of any administration, it has always been granted, until today—until today.

As I said, the Senate's business—a lot of the business this week is actually going to be focused on the advice and consent constitutional role that we have, especially as it relates to judges.

But I have been told by this White House, specifically the White House Counsel, I guess—to be honest, it is often difficult to figure out who is in charge over there—that I can't meet with any of these Ninth Circuit judges that we are going to vote on this week before the vote.

This is a shocking breach of constitutional norms between the White House and the Senate that every Senator here—every Senator, regardless of party—should be concerned about.

Why?

As I mentioned, the advice and consent role is really important for every Senate-confirmed position, mandated by the U.S. Constitution, but it is particularly important for judges—judges who will get life tenure. By the end of this week, it is likely that these three Ninth Circuit judges will be on the bench for the rest of their lives, and right now I can't get a 1-hour meeting with them.

They have enormous power over American citizens. And I am going to talk about the Ninth Circuit and the power it has over my citizens.

So my experience as a Senator is that I meet with as many judges as possible, and whenever I have requested a meeting of any administration to meet with a judge, it has always been granted. But I always, always, always meet with the Ninth Circuit judges.

As I mentioned, until now, I had interviewed every single Ninth Circuit judge that this body has voted on for the last 7 years—every single one—during my entire time in the Senate.

Why is it so important to me?

Why is it so important to everybody?

Well, specifically, as it relates to the Ninth Circuit, if you can look at this map, as many Americans know, our Federal court systems are divided into what are called circuits. The Ninth Circuit, which is this dark brown, is the biggest Federal court of appeals in the country. It is huge. Look at all the States that are under the jurisdiction of the Ninth Circuit: California, Idaho, Arizona, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Alaska, Hawaii. It is enormous. Almost one in five Americans are under the jurisdiction of the Ninth Circuit. It has enormous power, especially over my constituents in the great State of Alaska.

But here is the thing. If you look at the number of judges that each Circuit Court gets, another reason why the Ninth Circuit is so important and so powerful is that it gets an enormous number of judges. The Ninth Circuit is listed here on the far left. Out of 29 active judges, one judge comes from the great State of Alaska. One judge comes from the great State of Alaska. So, as you can imagine, discussing legal issues with any judge from the Ninth Circuit is very important to me and, more importantly, to the people I represent.

Here is something else about the Ninth Circuit. On so many issues that matter to my constituents, the court gets the legal issues wrong. The court gets the legal issues wrong.

Now, I have seen this firsthand. Almost 25 years ago, I had the honor of being a Ninth Circuit law clerk for the only Ninth Circuit judge we have in Alaska, Judge Andrew Kleinfeld, a phenomenal judge. I watched panel after panel in the Ninth Circuit get cases related to the great State of Alaska wrong.

Now, look. In some ways it is not their fault. Yes, they had different views and a legal outlook. But if you are a judge and you grew up in LA and all you know is LA and California laws, and now you are a Ninth Circuit judge and you are supposed to rule on all these Alaska-specific Federal laws, you really don't know what you are doing. You don't really know what you are doing, and I saw that as a young lawyer.

But don't take my word for it.

In the last 4 years, the U.S. Supreme Court has taken up three specific Alaska cases, two of which were from the Ninth Circuit and one of which was from the DC Circuit. These big, important circuits all got them wrong. They are cases that would have changed the history and future of my State.

So when I meet with nominees for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, it is usually always very cordial. I walk them through a lot of issues, legal issues of which they know very little about—again, not their fault—and to explain why these are so important to the people I represent.

Again, if you are an LA lawyer or a lawyer from Phoenix, you don't know about Native Alaskan law. You don't know about the Alaskan National Interest Lands Conservation Act, called ANILCA—a Federal law, 1,000 pages—that the U.S. Supreme Court, in the last 3 years, twice smacked down the Ninth Circuit, 9 to 0—9 to 0—because the Ninth Circuit continually gets these Alaska-focused statutes wrong.

So I walk them through these issues. That is all I do. It is not a big deal. It is actually trying to help the judges. I think every Ninth Circuit judge I have met with appreciates it.

Let me give you a couple of examples of what I would do if I could meet with these judges.

Like I said, ANILCA, or the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, is a hugely important Federal law that was passed in 1980. We didn't want it, by the way. It federalized almost 100 million acres of land in Alaska. Imagine that. Most States aren't even as big as 100 million acres.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled 9 to 0 in favor of a moose hunter who wanted access to Federal land. His name is John Sturgeon. He is a very famous Alaskan right now.

It went back to the Ninth Circuit. They misinterpreted it. It went back up to the U.S. Supreme Court—9-zip—they smacked it down again.

Justice Kagan, who wrote the second opinion, said: ''If [John] Sturgeon lived in any other State, his [law]suit would not have [had] a prayer of success. . . . Except that Sturgeon lives in Alaska. And as we [the U.S. Supreme Court] have said before, 'Alaska is often the exception, not the rule,''' when it comes to these kind of Federal laws in Federal parks.

Do you think it would be good to have a Ninth Circuit judge getting ready to get on the court to understand the Sturgeon case? It would be. So that is what I do. I have the judges read Sturgeon. I have them read other cases. It is all advice and consent. It is our constitutional role. Until today, I have done it with every Ninth Circuit judge.

Like I said, I was over at the White House on Friday, really kind of banging the table on the Biden administration's war on Alaska. Some of you may have seen a speech I gave last week. There are 20 Executive orders and Executive actions singularly focused on my great State—20—crushing working families.

And I said: You know, one thing I would like to do is continue my record of meeting with every Ninth Circuit

judge. I am available Sunday, Sunday night, all day Monday. Give me a call. I haven't heard anything back.

Something else I do with these judges when they come before me is I talk about Indian law. Now a lot of lawyers think, ''Hey, I really know Indian law well.'' And my advice and counsel in the advice-and-consent process, when it comes to Indian law in Alaska, is ''If you think you are an expert, throw out everything you know about lower 48 Indian law when it comes to Alaskan Indian law.

The Native Alaskan law, in Alaska—the Federal law—is 100 percent different than it is in the lower 48. This is just advice I give judges who are going on the Ninth Circuit. They don't know this. An LA lawyer doesn't know this.

This week, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Congress's passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, what we call in Alaska ANCSA, the largest settlement of indigenous land claims, certainly, in America, and probably in the world. It is a really successful act, not perfect, very innovative. But it has been litigated like crazy.

We had a case from the Ninth Circuit several years ago that essentially said: ANCSA created reservation land throughout the entire State of Alaska.

That would have changed the history of Alaska forever. Of course, the Ninth Circuit got it wrong. That case went up to the Supreme Court. Nine-zip, the Supreme Court smacked down the Ninth Circuit. They said: ANCSA doesn't do that. That is not what Congress intended.

Do you think it would be good for these judges this week, if I could sit down with them, to understand that? It would be really good, really important. It would help them for their job.

Just this year, the DC Circuit on another ANCSA-related case, the Chehalis case, got ANCSA wrong again. And guess what. It went up to the U.S. Supreme Court again. They just ruled on it 4 months ago. It was a huge victory for my State, again.

We wrote an amicus brief—Senator MURKOWSKI, Congressman YOUNG, and I. But it was enormously important. This wrong case of the DC Circuit would have changed the history of Alaska forever. The Supreme Court, 6 to 3, said: No, you are misinterpreting Alaska.

Do you think these judges on the Ninth Circuit who we are debating to confirm this week would learn a little bit about that if I could meet with them? They would.

Finally, the other thing I always do with circuit judges is I talk about the Second Amendment. The Second Amendment is really, really important to the people I represent. We use firearms for food, for self-defense in the wild. Well over 60 percent of all the homes in my State have firearms for these reasons.

If you are an LA lawyer, you don't know this stuff. But, all of a sudden, you are going to be ruling on cases that deal with Alaska or Idaho or Montana. And here is the thing: They might not know these issues, these judges. I have looked at their background. I wanted to interview them. Remarkably, I can't get an interview with them.

And here is the thing: As soon as they get confirmed, they are going to get these cases before them, in my State and other States, to rule on these kinds of issues.

Do you think a meeting would help them?

''Boy, I should really think about that. I remember Senator SULLIVAN talked about ANILCA and the Sturgeon case. I am really glad I read the Sturgeon case.''

This is why these advice-and-consent constitutional meetings are so important.

And, as I mentioned, I have been doing this my entire time in the Senate. I have never not had a meeting with a Ninth Circuit judge. It doesn't matter where they are from—Montana, Arizona, Washington State. They are going to rule on issues that relate to my State and my constituents.

And these judges don't mind it. They actually, I think, enjoy it. They learn. But this White House says: You can't meet with them.

This is absurd.

Here is the question: What are they hiding?

What are they worried about?

Are they hiding something? Are the judges hiding something?

Again, this is a precedent that Democrats and Republicans should all be against, because we know what goes around comes around in this body. And this just doesn't make sense.

All three of these Ninth Circuit judges will have life tenure and enormous, enormous power over everybody in the Ninth Circuit. That is 20 percent of all Americans, and, certainly, enormous power over the people in Alaska, whom I am privileged to serve and represent.

These judges are likely to know very little about these issues that I just talked about. Well, I believe I have a constitutional role to help them understand these issues better, and that is the way it has always been. Nobody has complained.

Absurdly, the White House has said: Well, Senator SULLIVAN, you can meet with a Ninth Circuit judge if they are from Alaska.

What? We have one judge, and she is not going to be retiring any time soon. That is it.

Now, here is the thing. I just talked to the previous administration's White House counsel this morning, when I called the Biden administration's counsel this morning. I am still waiting for that phone call, by the way, because I said: Look, if the White House Counsel is saying no to a U.S. Senator to do his constitutional duty, I would like to hear it directly from her.

So she hasn't called me back yet. But I talked to the previous administration's White House Counsel, and I asked: By the way, did you guys do this? I am just double-checking. I mean, I got to meet with all the Ninth Circuit judges President Trump put forward. But did you blackball Democrats? Did you do that?

And they said: Absolutely not.

I made a few phone calls to other people in the White House Counsel's office. They said: To the contrary, when any Senator wanted to meet with any circuit judge, we always made it happen.

So this is a new precedent. And, again, it doesn't matter if you are a Republican or a Democrat. This is just a bad precedent.

And the notion that ''Well, Senator, you get to meet with a Ninth Circuit judge from Alaska,'' when, by the way, California, I think, has close to 20 Ninth Circuit judges—but the notion that you can only meet with the one who is from your State is actually moronic. The people who need to be educated are the ones who aren't from your State, because they are all going to rule on issues from your State.

So I am still waiting for the White House Counsel to call me back—or whoever is in charge in the White House.

But I am going to conclude with this. I am going to go around them. I am going to go around them. Here is what I am going to do, and I hope someone is watching from the White House. But, more importantly, I hope someone is watching from the judge's chambers.

So, Judge Koh, we are getting ready to vote on your nomination tonight.

Judge Sung of Oregon, we are getting ready to vote on your nomination tomorrow.

Judge Sanchez of California, the rumor is, the majority leader is going to file cloture on your nomination.

Those are three Ninth Circuit judges.

Judge Holly Thomas of California, you might get voted on this week too.

Four.

Here is my ask: Give me a call. Give me a call. Give my office a call. I will meet with you tonight. Let's do a phone call. Do you want to learn about ANILCA? Do you want to learn about the Sturgeon case? It will make you a better Ninth Circuit judge. Here is the number: (202) 224–1026. Give my office a call. I am ready to meet anytime.

Here is the thing for the judges: It is 1 hour of your time. You are going to have lifetime tenure. It is 1 hour to talk to a U.S. Senator who is doing his constitutional duty for the people he represents. It shouldn't be that hard. As a matter of fact, this is probably your first test of judicial independence. A U.S. Senator of the Senate—of the Senate; read the Constitution—wants to undertake his advice and consent, his constitutional role, with you, OK?

You guys have read the Constitution, those four judges I just mentioned, but an unelected bureaucrat in the White

House—I guess the White House Counsel, but who the heck knows; it is hard to tell who is in charge over there—is blocking this.

So, again, give my office a call at (202) 224–1026. I am ready to meet and talk to you anytime before the vote. Don't worry—I don't think President Biden is going to yank your nomination if you call me. Heck, he probably doesn't even know this is going on. But you know this is the right thing to do, Judges. You have read the Constitution. Heck, if our meeting goes well, I might even vote for you.

But here is the thing: You will learn more about the issues that you are going to have to deal with very soon in your tenure that you probably don't know anything about—no offense to you. I have read your backgrounds. You don't know anything about Native Alaskan law. You don't know anything about ANILCA. You probably have very different views than I and my constituents do on the Second Amendment. But you need to hear these issues because you are going to be life-tenured on the Ninth Circuit, and you don't have time to talk to me, a U.S. Senator, who is a Senator representing a State from the Ninth Circuit? You know it is wrong.

By the way, my colleagues in the Senate know it is wrong. So I hope my Democratic and Republican colleagues realize that this is not a good precedent. This is not a good precedent. It has never happened as long as I have been here.

You know, from big things to small things, this administration has really focused in many ways on smashing political and institutional norms that have enjoyed strong bipartisan support. It is not good for this body, and it is not good for the government.

The Wall Street Journal, today, had an article about Biden's Federal regulators staging a coup against the Director of the FDIC on bank mergers. One of these regulators doesn't even have the power over bank mergers, and now he is trying to be in charge.

I serve on the U.S. Naval Academy's Board of Visitors. It is a huge honor. The President comes in, President Biden, and fires everybody on the service academies who was appointed by President Trump. Nobody has ever done that before—no President. Everybody on the Board of Visitors of the Naval Academy is furious—the Democrats, the Republicans. The No. 1 thing they are saying is, this President is the first one to politicize the service academies. Then, oh, by the way, he hasn't appointed anyone yet to replace the people he fired, so we didn't have a quorum for our meeting last week.

He is just smashing institutional norms. Yet this institutional norm of advice and consent, when it comes to circuit court judges with life tenure, is something that we have all agreed upon. The previous administration certainly allowed for it. Yet, right now, I can't meet with Ninth Circuit judges who are going to have enormous power for their entire lives over my constituents.

So, to my colleagues, we shouldn't allow this. You guys know it is wrong.

To the judges—like I said, Judge Sanchez, Judge Koh, Judge Sung, Judge Thomas—give my office a call. Do the right thing. Your first test of judicial independence is before you of the Senate. The U.S. Senate—of the Senate, of which I am a part—wants to do our constitutional role. Give us a call so we can do it. Ignore the very bad advice you are getting from the White House Counsel or whoever is in charge over there.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN EDWARD PRITCHARD

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, the time has come to once again bid farewell to another one of Team Blackburn's esteemed fellows.

Over the past year, we have had the privilege of working with Capt. Edward Pritchard, who came to us from the U.S. Marine Corps to serve as our first Department of Defense fellow.

It was a strange year to be a fellow here in the Senate, but Ed rose to the occasion and impressed us. He impressed every one of us with his work ethic, humor, and his singular commitment to maintaining the strength and integrity of the U.S. military. It has truly been an honor having Ed on our team, and I think I speak for each and every one of us when I say we will miss him.

Captain Pritchard, I thank you for your service to Tennessee and to this great Nation and wish you all the best as you head across the river to the Pentagon to start the next exciting chapter in your already distinguished career.

INFLATION

Madam President, last Friday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released a grim set of numbers that confirmed our worst fears: Inflation is getting worse, and by this month, the American people are in for even more economic pain. Why? Because their paychecks just can't keep up with the skyrocketing prices. On top of everything else, they get to look forward to a pay cut every month for the foreseeable future, and all this is happening just in time for Christmas. It is insult added to injury.

Now, it would be bad enough if this economic nosedive would have happened no matter what the White House had chosen to do, but it would not have happened. It was totally preventable. No, this is the direct result of the Democrats' reckless taxing-and-spending spree that started in March and has lasted all year long.

American families struggled to stretch their budgets through 6.8 percent inflation in November—that was in November—which is the highest we have seen in almost 40 years. We are looking at the largest 12-month increase since 1982.

Think about this: All of this happened just as the experts predicted and just as Tennesseans kept saying they feared this was what would happen.

Now, despite a mountain of evidence proving their recovery strategy has failed, Democrats are ready to lean into the past year's insanity and pump not millions, not billions, but trillions—trillions—of dollars into the economy that they have already destroyed. What is worse is they are trying to leverage this economic pain against their Republican colleagues by refusing to raise the debt ceiling to accommodate their own reckless spending.

You can't make this stuff up. This is Biden economics, it is intentional, and it is painful because what the Democrats are doing is showing they are willing to spend taxpayer money on things that taxpayers don't want, which is this destructive economic agenda.

So I ask my Democratic colleagues: What is it about these numbers that are staring you in the face that you do not understand? Are you so eager to force President Biden's ''Build Back Broke'' agenda on the American people that you are willing to throw reason and accountability and basic economics out the window? Is it really worth watching your fellow countrymen suffer? Is it worth watching people whom you represent, people who elected you, suffer?

If you all bothered to pay attention, what you would see is just how bad it has gotten out here in the real world. The policies that you are so convinced will lead us into a socialist utopia, as some on the left like to say, have dragged the people into a constant—constant—state of fear and worry.

One Tennessee mom told me last week:

> Marsha, this stuff scares me. It just scares me.

RUSSIA

Now, Madam President, this not only makes for an extremely discontented group of people, it makes us vulnerable as a nation. The new ''axis of evil,'' as I like to call them, is watching. Communist China, Iran, and North Korea are all watching the chaos here in Washington play out with great interest, and, if the past few weeks have taught us anything, so is their counterpart in the ''axis of evil''—Russia.

On Sunday, we saw a flood of so-called strong signals coming from the G7 following a meeting to discuss Russia's aggression toward Ukraine. Now, I don't discount the importance of these statements—I do hope Vladimir Putin heard us loud and clear—but I also know that statements mean nothing unless they come from a position of strength and unless they are accompanied by action, and right now, that is not what the Biden administration is projecting or doing.

President Biden's refusal to lead by example is putting us in danger, and it is putting our partners in Kiev in danger. His administration has spent the